St Mary's CE Primary School

Collecting Children from School Policy

Investing in the uniqueness of each individual.

"I am fearfully and wonderfully made"
Psalms 139 v 14

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Statement of intent

St Mary's CE Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety of all pupils when they leave school at the end of the day. We appreciate that, for many families, arrangements need to be flexible and it may be that several people care for the child after school. For this reason, we have set out clear procedures that all staff and parents must adhere to, to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils. The aim of this policy is to:

- Keep pupils safe.
- Ensure all staff members are aware of the correct procedures for the end of the school day.
- Make parents aware of the expectations regarding collecting children.
- Highlight the importance of parent-school communication.

Please note that this policy only applies to instances where pupils are collected from school. Procedures relating to pupils leaving school independently and travelling to and from school are covered in the school's Travel to and from School Policy.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2002
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE 'Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Extended Services Policy
- Travel to and from School Policy and Plan

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of School will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Communicating this policy to all members of staff and parents.
- Ensuring effective procedures are in place for pupils travelling to and from school.
- Liaising with parents to establish whether individual pupils need extra assistance.
- Informing parents where their child has not turned up to school to coordinate an effective response.
- Ensuring arrangements for dedicated school transport are in place.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils are collected safely at the end of the school day.
- Being wary of suspicious behaviour at the school gates.
- Monitoring the behaviour of pupils as they leave the school.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns identified during the end of the school day to the DSL.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.
- Ensuring their child is aware of, and adheres to, the established route for travelling to and from school.
- Informing the Head of School when their child has not returned home from school.
- Communicating to the school if they are going to be late to collect their child.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Behaving appropriately when travelling to and from school.
- Making sure they arrive to school on time

General collection procedure

Parents will promptly collect pupils at the end of the school day, which is 3:15pm, from classroom doors.

Parents will be made aware of what is expected of their behaviour when they are collecting pupils, e.g. that the school is a smoke-free zone.

Staff members will supervise the collection areas until all pupils have been collected, accounting for the school's late collection procedure. Sufficient staff to pupil ratios will be met at all times during the collection process.

Parents will be advised to be mindful of where they are parking when collecting their children so as not to disrupt traffic or block access. Additionally, parents will not leave their vehicles idling whilst waiting to collect their children.

Pupils will be allowed to travel home on their own in Years 5 and 6, as long as this arrangement is appropriate for their age and their parents have provided consent to school for this.

Staff members will not release a pupil if it is felt that the parents are not in a fit state to ensure the pupil's safety or if the pupil shows signs of distress or anxiety. In these cases, the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and children's social care, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

Pupils will only be permitted to leave the premises with adults who are registered with the school as a person with collection responsibility.

After-school club collection procedure

Parents will follow the normal collection procedure, as outlined in this policy, when picking up children from after-school clubs.

Where after-school club provision is provided by an external organisation, it will be the responsibility of that organisation to implement an appropriate process for the collection of pupils, ensuring that they effectively identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.

Pupils who have not been collected following an after-school club will be supervised until collected.

If parents are late to collect their children, parents may be charged.

Late collection procedure

Parents will notify the school at the first possible opportunity if they believe they will be late to collect their child.

The school will allow for a 5-minute window for late arrival. If a pupil has not been collected 5 minutes after the specified collection time, a staff member will try to contact the pupil's parents. If the pupil's parents cannot be reached via the contact details provided, emergency contacts will be contacted, and the school will continue to try and contact the parents. If the parents and emergency contacts cannot be contacted, the non-collection procedure will be followed as outlined in this policy.

The school will hold at least one emergency contact for each pupil and will have more than one where reasonably possible.

All staff members, including those in charge of after-school activities, will be aware of the school's internal procedure for late collection and will ensure that the situation is resolved whilst causing as little distress as possible to the pupil.

While awaiting collection, pupils will be supervised at all times, ensuring appropriate staffing ratios are met.

Where appropriate, a staff member will sensitively ask the pupil whether they are aware of any reason that could account for their parents being late.

Recurrence of late collection

The length and frequency of late collections are monitored by the school. The school will keep a record of incidents where parents are late with no reasonable explanation.

Concerns regarding a pupil's safety and welfare associated with late collection will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

In the event of recurrence of late collection, where no reasonable explanation has been given, a letter will be sent home to the parents inviting them to a discussion about their circumstances.

Parents will be made aware of the arrangements that may be put in place if they continue to collect their child late, including the school's right to enforce a penalty charge.

The school will charge a £15 fine for parents who are late to collect their child more than twice a term without a reasonable explanation.

Collecting a child on someone's behalf

The school will never release a pupil into the care of another adult who is not a family member or named emergency contact without the consent of their parents.

Social workers will not be permitted to collect pupils from the school to attend care review meetings without the prior consent of teachers, foster carers, parents and the pupil themselves.

The school will not accept a list of people who may collect the pupil as a substitute to calling the school office and informing the school directly of the change in collection.

Pupils may be collected from school by an older sibling if the sibling is aged 16 or older.

If parents wish for their child to be collected by another party who does not have parental responsibility, whether this is a regular occurrence or a single occurrence, they will notify the school in writing.

In an emergency, verbal consent may be given for an agreed person to take their child home. This will be recorded, and a letter will be sent to the parents confirming that the arrangement was made at their request. Verbal consent will include a full physical description of the person, unless already known to the school.

A password may be requested to be used by both parties to ensure the identity of the person collecting the pupil is the individual arranged by the parent.

Staff members who are unsure of an adult's identity will ask to see identification. If there is uncertainty about a person's identity following the checking of their identification, the following procedure will be followed:

- A staff member will take the pupil to the school office
- The pupil's parents will be contacted for further advice

- A member of the SLT will be made aware of the situation
- If the pupil's parents are not contactable, the standard procedure for uncollected pupils will be followed

Under no circumstances will a pupil be allowed to leave the school with someone if they are showing signs of distress or anxiety.

Non-collection procedure

The school will continue to try and contact the parents and named emergency contacts in the event of a non-collection. A detailed record of the action taken, and the calls made, will be kept.

Under no circumstances will staff members go and look for the parents. A staff member will supervise the pupil at all times.

If no contact has been made with the pupil's parents or emergency contacts, and no one has arrived to collect the child within an hour since the original collection time – the end of the school day or the scheduled end time of an after-school club– the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed and children's social care, and the police if appropriate, will be contacted.

A member of staff will stay with the pupil until children's social care arrives.

Once the situation has been resolved, the reason the circumstances arose will be established and noted, and steps to avoid recurrence will be taken by the school and parents.

Monitoring and review

Following an event of non-collection, the relevant procedures will be reviewed to ensure they were effective and will be amended where necessary.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of School and DSL. The next scheduled review date for this policy is 30.09.2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all staff and parents.